



Cambridge City Hall Annex 344 Broadway, Cambridge, MA

Public Art At A Glance

Artist:	Mike Glier
Title:	<i>Town Green</i>
Medium:	Acrylic paint on walls
Dimensions:	Overall 25 x 60 x 30' atrium space
Date:	2003

Town Green is a series of large-scale wall paintings, created by artist Mike Glier, that transforms the two-story atrium of the newly renovated City Hall Annex into an indoor “garden” and evokes the relationships between civic goals, “green” design, historic preservation, and public transparency. *Town Green* has been commissioned by the City of Cambridge through the Cambridge Arts Council’s Public Art Program. Visit their web site at www.cambridgeartscouncil.org.

The City Hall Annex is home to a diverse group of City departments: the Arts Council; the Animal Commission; Traffic, Parking, and Transportation; the Conservation Commission; and Community Development. In 2002, when Mike Glier began the research for his public art, he spoke with directors of all five departments to learn of their work and their missions. Glier also heard from the City of Cambridge and the architects about their ambitions to be leaders in combining historic preservation with sustainable design in the renovation of a municipal building. Glier has created a work of public art that suggests connections between architecture and civic goals, between a city’s appreciation of its history and its commitment to its future, between the individual voice of a citizen and the public discourse of communities, and between the unchecked energy of growth and the wisdom of government.

While *Transparency*, *Flow*, *Growth* and *Pleasure* are the themes that Glier derived from the departments’ mission statements, urban moments are his subjects:

- a dog walker
- office workers on a coffee break
- birds in a thorny rose bush
- verdant New England porch vines climbing the walls
- a bicycle left at a parking meter
- a girl reading in the grass nearby.

Acrylic paint and charcoal are the artist’s media – painterly layers or graphic abstractions using transparent rose, greens, and yellows lie underneath a network of charcoal line.

From its beginnings in 1871 as an elementary school, the City Hall Annex building has gone through a history of nineteenth century prominence, twentieth century decay, and now twenty-first century state-of-the-art restoration. *Town Green* speaks to this history and fills the City Hall Annex atrium with a visualization of growth and renewal. The tens of thousands of visitors who will enter this building – to pay their parking tickets, to obtain a pet license, to attend a community meeting, or to view art in the new CAC Gallery – will encounter a grand civic space made rich with public art.

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